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### **Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary**

The sanctuary coordinated with the Ventura Power Squadron and the county of Ventura to design and print a Boating and Safety Brochure that highlights safety issues and responsible wildlife viewing techniques for the sanctuary. Approximately 27,750 Boating and Safety brochures were mailed to all registered boat owners in Ventura County. The mailing was made possible by the California Department of Boating and Waterways.

In January, an ROV Teacher Workshop was hosted by the sanctuary, the University of California Santa Barbara's (UCSB) Marine Science Institute and Santa Barbara City College's Marine Technology Department. Two teams from Cabrillo High School's Marine Technology Institute placed first and second in the top level Ranger class competition in the Monterey Bay Regional Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) competition held at Monterey Peninsula College. On June 25-27, Dan Basta will be a keynote speaker at the national competition to highlight ROVs at work in national marine sanctuaries as these two teams move on to compete in the 3rd Annual ROV Design Competition for High School and College Students at the University of California, Santa Barbara. This competition will be hosted by the National Marine Sanctuary Program and UCSB's Marine Science Institute.

### **Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary**

The sanctuary, in cooperation with Le Tausagi, the American Samoa environmental educators' group, co-hosted a teachers' workshop with 20 teachers and one science education specialist from the local Department of Education. The goal of the workshop was to evaluate current projects that the agencies and Le Tausagi offer to the schools, to seek ways to improve those projects, and to get the advice of the teachers for new programs that would best fit into their curriculum needs. Twelve of the teachers indicated that they would like to continue the dialogue begun at the workshop, and to sit on an advisory group to Le Tausagi. This will enable the sanctuary to refine and refocus its programs directed to the schools.

### **Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary**

A permanent exhibit featuring the oldest known living coral in the sanctuary is now on display at the Fossil Reef State Park on Windley Key. Called the "Bicentennial Coral, this 415-year old "Redwood of the Sea" was collected and dated by the sanctuary program's Harold Hudson. The specimen is a Mountainous Star Coral, *Montastrea annularis (faveolata)* that is represented by a 10 ft long core sample and a full-length x-radiograph that reveals its annual growth bands. The park manager and professional designers worked over the past year to help create the exhibit. The original sample was cut into two half-core sections. The remaining section will be used to design a similar and more elaborate display for the Nancy Foster Center in Key West. A replica of the entire coral is planned that will illustrate the complex interactions of these magnificent structures with the coral reef ecosystem.

A Notice of Violation was issued to the contractor in Key West Harbor for dredging the Key West Channel outside its permit specifications. Assessment of hopper dredge impacts outside the dredge footprint continues, as do plans to refine future operations to prevent any further damage and discussions of how to address the damage. Sanctuary staff attended a two-day working group meeting on the harbor-dredging project last week, at which these incidents were discussed, along with ongoing refining of monitoring initiatives and other efforts to protect marine resources during the project.

On April 21, Florida legislators, scientists, educators and students were among the 350 people who visited the sanctuary's information station in Florida's State Capital Rotunda in celebration of Oceans Day 2004. The purpose of Oceans Day, sponsored by the non-partisan Florida Ocean Alliance, was to promote awareness and stewardship of the state's ocean resources and its "Oceans of Opportunity." To launch the annual event, Florida's Governor Bush addressed the audience in the Capital Courtyard at a mid-morning press conference. The Governor emphasized the importance of Florida's marine resources in supporting the state's economy and Florida's commitment to protecting these resources for the future. Oceans Day 2004 coincided with the official release of the Oceans Commission report. After summarizing the Oceans Commission report for the audience, Commissioner Frank Muller-Karger, Florida appointee to the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, formally presented the document to Governor Bush for his review. He also presented copies of the report to the Secretary of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

The Florida Aquarium, Reef Environmental Education Foundation (REEF) and the sanctuary attempted to remove two Indo Pacific batfish from Molasses Reef on Friday, April 30. The sanctuary assisted with logistics for the mission. REEF, with assistance from the Monroe County Tourist Development Council and vessel support from the sanctuary, plans to invite media representatives to observe the capture mission. Once captured, the fish will reside at the Florida Aquarium in Tampa, surrounded by exhibits explaining the dangers posed by releasing exotic species.

### **Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary**

Theodore W. Kassinger, Department of Commerce General Counsel and nominated Deputy Secretary of Commerce visited the sanctuary's offices and the Skidaway Institute of Oceanography campus on Earth Day. Mr. Kassinger presented a NOAA Environmental Hero award to Bob Williams of the University of Georgia Aquarium for his volunteer work with the sanctuary in establishing the Sanctuary Distance Learning Program. District Chief of Staff Lenett Richardson of Congressman Jack Kingston's office participated in the ceremony and announced an award of \$100,000 to the University of Georgia for new exhibits on the sanctuary at the aquarium.

The sanctuary and the National Data Buoy Center redeployed the sanctuary data buoy on April 4, 2004. The redeployment included the installation of a new package of instruments to measure bottom conditions in the sanctuary. A U.S. Coast Guard buoy tender deployed the enhanced buoy, and sanctuary divers assisted to connect the bottom sensors to the buoy telemetry. The information the bottom sensors provide will help recreational divers plan their dives to the reef and alert anglers to fishing conditions. The new instruments will measure bottom temperature, salinity, dissolved oxygen, and water turbidity at the sanctuary, and will display conditions at both the surface and bottom. The information can be seen at the buoy website at [http://seaboard.ndbc.noaa.gov/station\\_page...6;station=41008](http://seaboard.ndbc.noaa.gov/station_page...6;station=41008). The turbidity measurements will be of great interest to fishermen and divers to best determine the clarity of the waters.

On April 24, Sanctuary Manager Reed Bohne gave awards to three artists at the sanctuary's Fantastic Fishes Art Contest, part of the Savannah College of Art and Design's (SCAD) Sidewalk Arts Festival. The artists—one SCAD student, one SCAD alumni and one prospective SCAD student—were recognized for their underwater environment chalk drawings created on the sidewalks around Savannah's Forsyth Park. At least 80 artists responded to Gray's Reef's call for drawing of the underwater environment. There were approximately 500 entries in the festival. It is estimated that more than 10,000 people visited the park to view the artworks. All of the Fantastic Fishes Art Contest entries will be posted on the Gray's Reef website at <http://graysreef.noaa.gov>

### **Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary**

Seattle dredging firm Manson Construction Company has agreed to pay one hundred thousand dollars in a settlement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The firm was cited for allowing mud dredged from the Port of Richmond to leak from its barge into Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary in 1998. In excess of 20,000 cubic yards of mud seeped from the barge *Bayport* into sanctuary waters. The incident, which EPA investigators termed accidental, occurred as the vessel was being towed to an EPA-approved dumping site 50 miles west of the Golden Gate, approximately ten miles beyond sanctuary boundaries.

The number of birds found from Stinson Beach to Monterey Bay, Calif., that have been harmed by oil from a shipwrecked freighter *S.S. Jacob Luckenbach*, which sank in 1953, has dropped significantly in the last few years. This is due to a multi-agency team, comprised of the U.S. Coast Guard and the California Department of Fish and Game, Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary and other NOAA offices, that removed more than 100,000 gallons of oil from the wreck in 2002. Only 13 oiled birds were collected along the coast and on the Farallon Islands following last month's heavy storm. Following winter storms two years ago, 1,915 oiled birds were collected. In the winter of 2002-03, 577 oiled birds were collected.

In February 2002, officials determined the oil came from the S.S. *Jacob Luckenbach*, a cargo ship that sank about 17 miles southwest of the Golden Gate Bridge in 1953. A four-month, \$19 million oil removal project was completed in September 2002. Trace amounts of oil remain trapped under heavy parts of the vessel. That portion was inaccessible to divers.

### **Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary**

The sanctuary's O'ahu Programs Coordinator and Assistant Programs Coordinator worked with staff from the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve in coordinating a Marine Conservation Evening on Wednesday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, which was held at the NOAA's Mokupapapa Discovery Center in downtown Hilo. The event featured special guest speakers that presented information on marine protected species and other conservation issues in Hawaii. There were researchers and field professionals available to answer questions from the public. Informational booths and hands-on activities were also available for children while the lectures were going on. This event was a great success, with over 100 attendees.

### **Monitor National Marine Sanctuary**

On April 5, staff from the sanctuary participated in a press conference at the North Carolina Museum of History, Raleigh, NC. The press conference was held to announce that artifacts from the sanctuary would be loaned by NOAA and The Mariners' Museum to the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum for display, which is now being built in Hatteras, NC. The press conference was attended by all three local network affiliates, a local newspaper, and was followed by a live interview in a Raleigh television studio.

### **Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary**

On April 25, MERITO staff and interns hosted an information and activity booth at Watsonville's annual Día del Niño/Día de la Tierra (Day of the Child/Earth Day) event at Ramsay Park. For the second year in a row, environmental organizations and agencies such as the sanctuary, Save Our Shores, Watsonville Wetlands Watch, Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve, Ecology Action, Camp SEA Lab, Monterey Bay, Resource Conservation District, ALBA and others, provided a special "Earth Day" component to the City of Watsonville's sixth annual Día del Niño/Day of the Child celebration. Festivities, including kid's activities involving protection of the environment, the unveiling of Watsonville's new Nature Center, music, dancing, free food and sunshine brought out over 2,800 children and parents.

### **Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve**

On April 15th, Dan Basta, the Northwestern Hawaiian Island Reserve Staff, NMS Pacific Regional Coordinator and Hawaiian Island Humpback Whale NMS Coordinator met with Congressional staff to discuss the status of NMS Pacific Sites. Congressional staff included the Senior Legislative Assistant for Congressman Neil Abercrombie, legislative staff for the House Subcommittee

on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans, and NOAA Congressional Affairs. The briefing covered topics related to the NWHI Reserve that included the sanctuary designation and timeline, zoning, co-location of the new office space, and current level of funding for existing projects. Basta also addressed the Fishery Management Council Chairs and provided materials on each sanctuary as well as meeting separately with the NOAA Fisheries Regional Administrators.

### **Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary**

The sanctuary, as a member of the NW Stranding Network and in coordination with NOAA's Fisheries, was involved with a live stranding of a sea otter pup at First Beach after being notified by the Quileute Tribe. Quileute Enforcement agents had removed the animal for public safety concerns, as it is in a high profile area, and the animal appeared to be quite sick.

### **Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary**

The sanctuary was featured in the Official 2004 Cape Cod Guidebook produced by the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce. The 4-page feature story appeared on pages 20-23, and has a market value of \$18,740. The press run for the guidebook is 400,000. The book is distributed free of charge throughout Cape Cod and at tourism centers throughout Massachusetts. The Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce has also produced an eight-page newspaper supplement that again features the sanctuary — this time on half of the back page. The supplement was included in all copies and all editions of the Boston Globe and Worcester Telegram on April 14. Total readership for this publication is estimated to be 1.5 million.

### **Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve**

The sanctuary and underwater preserve hosted the premiere of the sanctuary's new documentary "Tragedies in the Mist," on Friday, April 2. The sell-out event was a great success. Complimentary feedback was abounding. Over 100 copies of the video were sold through the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation.

### **West Coast Sanctuaries**

A three-week cruise aboard the 224 ft. *R/V McArthur II* by the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary continues. The cruise has moved from the Cordell Bank area, through the Gulf of the Farallones and into the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. This cross-sanctuary collaboration with partners from NOAA Fisheries, United States Geological Survey, Marine Protected Area Center, and Deep Ocean Engineering is using a towed camera and sidescan sonar to characterize seafloor geology and biological characteristics.




### National Marine Sanctuary Program

Admiral Lautenbacher presented the NOAA Education Plan to an audience of approximately 50 attendees at his Education Roundtable on April 15. The Roundtable was developed by NOAA's Education Council and NOAA's Office of Education and Sustainable Development. The National Marine Sanctuary Program's representative to NOAA's Education Council also attended the Education Roundtable. Some of the sanctuary education partners in attendance included Nauticus, the United States Naval Academy, JASON Foundation for Education, National Science Teachers Association, National Science Foundation, and the American Meteorological Society. The NOAA Education Plan is available for review at <http://www.oesd.noaa.gov/council/index.html>.

The Communications Branch Chief of the National Marine Sanctuary Program and representatives from the consulting firm Booz Allen Hamilton met with the National Park Service's ranking staff at their Harper's Ferry (WV) national visual standards design headquarters. The NPS's visual standards design headquarters oversees all of the brochures/publications, films/videos, visitor centers and signage for each park throughout the nation. The intent of the meeting was to learn of the NPS's successes in standardizing visual design since the National Marine Sanctuary Program strives to stay on the cutting edge of maintaining a consistent "corporate image." The parties also worked towards crafting cooperative visual standards, as in signage, for the NPS and NMSP to use in instances where our management responsibilities overlap, i.e., Channel Islands NMS, Gulf of the Farallones NMS, Florida Keys NMS and Olympic Coast NMS.

Two scientists from the National Marine Sanctuary Program traveled to the National Data Buoy Center and National Coastal Data Development Center at Stennis Space Center, Miss., to continue to explore options for FY04 investments in a West Coast ocean observing system. The Program's goal is to make a one-time expenditure in technology or technical expertise in ways that help put a recognizable "face" to system-wide monitoring activities and to help secure acceptance within emerging regional observing systems being developed as part of Integrated Ocean Observing System.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program's partnership coordinator attended the U.S. Naval Institute 130th annual conference to staff a joint Navy-NOAA exhibit on the USS Alligator. Rear Admiral Cohen, Chief of the Office of Naval Research, attended. NOAA's Hunt for the Alligator project was well received by attendees. In particular, retired ex-submariners expressed interest in volunteering their time to work on the project. The Program and the Office of Naval Research are considering how to develop a work plan for volunteers or to set up a "Friends of the Alligator" group. In addition, representatives from the salvage industry were inquiring about the search of the lost submarine. They may be interested in taking advantage of any Alligator search expedition to test one of their new instruments.



The National Marine Sanctuary Program continues to meet with Jean-Michel Cousteau, president of the Ocean Futures Society, to discuss a six-part high definition film series that will include a two-hour episode covering national marine sanctuaries, titled America's Underwater Treasures. Jean-Michel Cousteau's Ocean Adventures, in alliance with KQED and PBS, will take viewers across the world's oceans to meet our most mysterious sea creatures, explore shipwrecks and find hidden treasures.



